Teaching Reading Skills

To what extend do you agree?

A. Reading is like listening, except that the input is written, not spoken.

B. Comprehension means understanding all the words in a text.

C. Reading, in the classroom, means reading aloud.

D. For teaching purposes, texts should be simplified.

E. Reading is a good way of improving vocabulary.

F. The aim of classroom reading is the appreciation of literary texts.

G. If you can read well in your first language, you'll probably be able to read well in a second one.

Reading Skills

SKIMMING

Reading quickly to understand the gist

Examples:

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SCANNING

Reading for specific information

Examples:

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READING FOR DETAIL

Reading to find precise information about specific points

Examples:

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GUESSING NEW WORDS

Using context/ co-text to derive a general understanding

Examples:

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INFERENCE

"Reading between the lines"

Examples:

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BLAIR ANNOUNCES GOB-STOPPER

Tony Blair has announced he loves Gob-Stoppers in a recent dramatic speech. The Ex-Premier said; *"I just can't stop sucking"*. 5

The announcement comes after he was recently spotted taking time out from important UN work in order to visit a sweet shop, up to three times a day, so he could "stock up on supplies". 10

Asked if his sweet addiction could interfere with his work, he replied; "It is of no consequence or concern to the general public whether my eating habits affect the important work of the UN". Critics disagree, however; "I fail to see how the Ex-Prime Minister can focus on the day-to-day work of promoting peace," said David Cameron, leader of the opposition; "when he spends his 15 time thinking of only thing: where his next bag of sweets is coming from." The opposition leader went on to demand the immediate resignation of the Ambassador for Peace, and a replacement found.

The Labour members, however, simply laughed at him, shouting references to Cameron's own love of crisps. 20

The Ex-Prime Minister is expected to seek help for his addiction, which sees him spending up to £50 a week (half his pocket money) on sweets. A further announcement is expected next Wednesday.

Match the tasks to the reading sub-skill

A. Read the text quickly (1 minute) and choose the best title: 1. Blair announces gob-stopper 2. Blair fails in new role 3. Ex-PM announces new plan	Skimming
B. Discuss the follow questions with a partner. *Do you think Tony Blair wanted to make the announcement?* *Who do you think the writer agrees with more: Tony Blair or David Cameron?*	Scanning
C. Look at the following words from the text. What do they refer to? What do you think they mean? gob-stopper (4)/ stock up on (11)/ critics (14)/ crisps (20)	Reading for detail
D. What do the following things in the text refer to? 3/ crisps/ 50/ next Wednesday	Guessing new words
E. Answer the following questions while you read the text: Why did Tony Blair make the announcement? Why does David Cameron thinks it's a problem? How did the rest of the Labour party react to? How is Blair going to stop his addiction?	Inference

Comprehension Questions

Yesterday I saw the palgish flester gollining begrunt the bruck. He seemed very chanderbil, so I did not jorter him, just deapled to him quistly. Perhaps later he will besand cander, and I will be able to rangel him.

1. What was the flester doing, and where?

2. What sort of a flester was he?

3. Why did the writer decide not to jorter him?

4. How did she deaple?

5. What did she hope would happen later?

From Ur, P. (1996), *A Course in Language Teaching* CUP

Comprehension Questions

Yesterday I saw the new patient hurrying along the corridor. He seemed very upset, so I did not follow him, just called to him gently. Perhaps later he will feel better, and I will be able to talk to him.

1. What is the problem described here?
2. Is this event taking place indoors or outside?
3. Did the writer try to get near the patient?
4. What do you think she said when she saw him?
5. What might the job of the writer be?
6. Why do you think she wants to talk to the patient?

From Ur, P. (1996), *A Course in Language Teaching* CUP

Stages for Reading

- Create interest in the text

- Pre-teach new vocabulary and clarify culturally specific references.

- Set the first Reading task, and a time limit for this.

- Students Read for the first time.

- Students compare their findings in pairs, followed by a brief class feedback.

- Set a 2nd more detailed Reading task.

- Make sure students are familiar with and have understood the task.

- Students compare their findings in pairs, followed by a brief class feedback. Teacher may need to refer to specific passages to clarify doubts.

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- *Possible 3rd Reading task focusing on a language point.*

- *Students compare their findings in pairs.*

- *Teacher conducts feedback, leading to him or her clarifying or guiding students to a better understanding of the language point.*

- *Language practice.*

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- Freer speaking or writing in the context of the reading, that possibly facilitates the students use the grammar, function or vocabulary focused on earlier.

Reading Skills

- skimming
- scanning
- transcoding information to diagrammatic display
- basic reference skills
- selective extraction of relevant points from a text
- extracting salient points to summarise a text
- distinguishing the main idea from supporting detail
- identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse
- recognising indicators of discourse
- interpreting a text by going outside it
- understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices
- understanding relations within the sentence
- understanding the communicative value (function) of sentences and utterances
- understanding explicitly stated information
- understanding information when not explicitly stated
- deducing meaning from context
- recognising the script of a language

Tasks for reading

- Information questions: Where, when, what…

- Yes / no / don't know

- True / false

- Multiple choice and multiple exclusion

- Match paragraphs with summaries

- Match paragraphs with topic sentences

- Match paragraphs and pictures

- Un-jumble paragraphs

- Summarise

- Agree / Disagree

- Fill in gaps in a summary of the text

- Draw a map, a person a graph, a house etc, based on the text

- Follow instructions in a manual or recipe.